

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SAA-01
SES-02 SSM-03 ACDA-12 IO-14 EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /102 W
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O P 281445Z SEP 78
FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2714
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY LAGIERS
473#-/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 944
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
ZRUQMNS/AMEMBASSY SANA 253
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 6954

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGSC SOPN, EGY, IS, TS
SUBJ: CAMP DAVID: FAVORABLE SHIFT IN GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED
PRESS COMMENTARY

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1. TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY LA PRESSE, UNDER
BY-LINE OF PAPER'S SENIOR EDITOR, SLAH MAAOUI, BEGAN
ZPUBLICATION OF A SERIES OF FRONTPAGE COMMENTARIES ON CAMP
DAVID ACCORDS SEPTEMBER 26. PARTS TWO AND
THREE APPEARED SEPTEMBER 27 AND 28
X AND A FOURTH SECTION
IS TO FOLLOW. ON THE WHOLE, ARTICLES ARE NOTABLE FOR

THEIR MODERATION AND BALANCE AND FOR SUPPORT EXPRESSED FOR SADAT AND THE ACCORDS. LA PRESSE IS CLEARLY ATTEMPTING TO PRESENT CAMP DAVID IN MOST POSITIVE MANNER POSSIBLE, EVEN TO POINT OF STRESSING CONCESSIONS WON BY SADAT AND OPPORTUNITY WHICH THEY OFFER. IN VIEW OF THE PAPER'S OFFICIAL RELATION TO GOT, LA PRESSE'S COMMENTS ARE SIGNIFICANT SHIFT FROM EARLIER POSITION THAT SADAT HAD GONE BACK ON HIS WORD NOT TO MAKE SEPARATE PEACE WITH ISRAEL. FOLLOWING IS BRIEF SUMMARY OF EDITORIALS.

2. GENERAL HEADING OF ARTICLES IS "MIDDLE EAST: THE SOUND AND THE FURY". PART ONE ENTITLED, "WHERE IS SADAT GOING?" OPENED WITH OBSERVATION THAT IS NOW BECOMING POSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND REAL MEANING OF ACCORDS. SADAT'S ACTIONS ARE TIED TO SINGLE IDEA OF COMBATING ISRAEL, AND THE ELEMENTS OF HIS STRATEGY ARE:

---VICIOUS CIRCLE OF WARS MUST BE BROKEN IN ORDER TO AVOID THREAT OF GLOBAL CONFLAGRATION

---ONLY ALTERNATIVE IS ONE OF NEGOTIATING; AND

--- NEW FACTOR OF U.S. SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL IN OBTAINING CONCESSIONS IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAEL.

3. TURNING TO ACCORDS THEMSELVES, MAAOUI DESCRIBED
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THEM AS PROVIDING--FOR FIRST TIME--A SET OF PRINCIPLES FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT, AND FOR EVACUATION OF THE SINAI IN FRAMEWORK OF AN EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TREATY. WHILE THE AMBIGUITY OF ACCORDS CONCERNING THE WEST BANK, GAZA AND THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE CLEARLY RAISES MANY DOUBTS, IT WOULD SEEM INCONCEIVABLE TO CRITICIZE SADAT FOR REESTABLISHING EGYPT SOVEREIGNTY OVER LANDS TAKEN BY FORCE. MAAOUI THEN NOTED THAT CAREFUL READING OF ACCORDS INDICATES THAT SADAT SECURED FROM ISRAEL FIVE MAJOR CONCESSIONS OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD:

--END OF THE MILITARY RULE IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES;
--WITHDRAWAL OF THE ISRAELI FORCES FROM ALL THESE TERRITORIES WITH THE EXCEPTION OF SOME SPECIFIED PLACES;
--A FREEZE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW SETTLEMENTS IN THE WEST BANK;
--FREE ELECTIONS FOR THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE SO THAT THEY MAY ASSUME THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN A SELF-GOVERNMENT; AND
--RECOGNITION BY ISRAEL OF THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

4. PART TWO OF SERIES, CONTINUED SEPTEMBER 27 UNDER TITLE,
"CAMP DAVID-ITS VICES AND ITS VIRTUES," TOOK POSITION
THAT THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS DOES NOT REPRESENT AN OVER-
ALL APPROACH TO SETTLEMENT, AND THAT DISPUTE IS NOW
BEING VIEWED AS SERIES OF SEPARATE PROBLEMS RATHER THAN
ONE INDIVISIBLE ONE. MAJOR FAULT, HOWEVER, IS THAT
KEY PROBLEM OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IS MISREPRESENTED
AND AVOIDED. THIS IS BECAUSE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE ARE
NOT INCLUDED IN PROCESS, BUT ARE REPRESENTED BY JORDAN,
THUS LESSENING CHANCE THAT PLO MIGHT BE REPRESENTED.
THIS IS FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF RABAT SUMMIT AGREEMENTS
CONCERNING PLO.

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5. HOWEVER, THE AGREEMENTS INDICATE THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE ACCEPTED A LONG PROCESS LEADING TO DISENGAGEMENT FROM THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AND REPRESENT A STEP TOWARD ISRAEL'S EVACUATION FROM THESE TERRITORIES. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY CLEARLY REPRESENT A VALUABLE GAIN TOWARD THE ESTAB-
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LISHMENT OF A FAIR PEACE IN THE FUTURE AND COULD LEAD TO AN EVENTUAL DIRECT PARTICIPATION OF THE PLO. THIS COULD EXPLAIN EGYPT'S VIOLATION OF THE RABAT ACCORDS. EVER# THING NOW DEPENDS ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE PALESTINIANS AND OF THE OTHER ARAB PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED. WILL THEY GRASP THE OPPORTUNITY TOWARDS PEACE GIVEN TO THEM BY SADAT OR WILL THEY SEEK TO SABOTAGE IT? THE FUTURE OF THE CAMP DAVID AGREEMENTS DEPENDS ON THE ANSWER WHICH IS GIVEN TO THIS QUESTION. SADAT HAS GONE AS FAR AS HE CAN ON HIS LONELY VENTURE. HE NOW NEEDS THE SUPPORT OF THE MAIN PARTIES CONCERNED.

6. SERIES CONTINUED SEPTEMBER 28 WITH THIRD ARTICLE ENTITLED, "SHOULD SADAT BE SUPPORTED?" MAAOUI DESCRIBED ACCORDS AS BEING NEITHER TOTALLY GOOD NOR TOTALLY BAD, BUT HE CRITICIZED STEADFASTNESS FROM WHICH REJECTS A PRIORI ANY TRIPARTITE ACCORD REACHED BY EGYPT. THUS FRONT'S POSITION WAS DETERMINED IN ADVANCE. LOOKING AT ACCORDS OBJECTIVELY, HE SAID, THEY REPRESENT A CONSIDERABLE CHIEVEMENT FOR ARAB CAUSE EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE "PERFECTIBLE". GREATEST FAILINGS CONCERN REPRESENTATION OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND STATUS OF JERUSALEM, BUT SPIRIT AND TONE OF AGREEMENTS DEMONSTRATE THESE CAN BE REMEDIED. MATTER IS NOW ONE OF EXPLOITING THIS OPPORTUNITY. REFUSAL SERVES NO PURPOSE AND ONLY CONTINUES STALEMATE AND STRENGTHENS ISRAEL IN ITS ARROGANCE. MAAOUI CONCLUDED THAT SADAT SUCCEEDED IN MAKING FIRST BREACH IN ZIONIST INTRANSIGENCE. RESULT IS NOT MIRACULOUS BUT IS FIRST OF ITS KIND. IT WOULD BE ABERRANT NOT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS.

7. FOR CAIRO: PLEASE PASS COPY TO JIM BISHOP. FYI, EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TOLD POLITICAL OFFICER SEPT. 27 THAT HE WAS
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"EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH LA PRESSE ARTICLES."
KING

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Message Attributes

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